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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

At the National Research Council Building,

November 12, 1918, at 9.30 A. M.

Present: Messrs. Cross, Howe, Johnston, Mendenhall, Merriam, Millikan, Pupin, Rous, Washburn, Woods and Woodward.

In the absence of the Chairman of the Board Mr. Woodward, upon motion, served as temporary Chairman.

The minutes of the preceding meeting of October 8, and of the intervening meetings of the Interim Committee, having been circulated by mail, were approved.

The following letter from the President of the National Academy of Sciences, Mr. Walcott, was read for the information of the Executive Board:

> It gives me pleasure to inform you that the plan for International Organization of Research presented by Dr. Hale to the Council of the National Academy of Sciences, and approved by that body at the Annual Meeting of the Academy in April, 1918, has been unanimously adopted by the Inter-Allied Conference, which was held under the auspices of the Royal Society of London, on October 9, 1918.
>
> May I request that you bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Executive Board of the Research Council at its next meeting?

The Acting Chairman of the Council presented the question of the status of the war organization of the Council in view of the fact that the war has been brought practically to an end, and Mr. Pupin

Moved: That a Committee of five be appointed to consider the problems of reorganization of the Council under present conditions, and to make recommendations. *Adopted.*

The Acting Chairman of the Council appointed the following Committee: Messrs. Merriam (Chairman), Howe, Johnston, Millikan, Pupin.

Engineering Division.—Moved: That Mr. George H. Clevenger, of the Bureau of Mines, be appointed Chairman of the Section on Metallurgy of the Division of Engineering, at a salary at the rate of $5,000 per year, the appointment to be during the present fiscal year ending June 30, 1919. *Adopted.*

The meeting adjourned at 11.00 a.m.

Paul Brockett, *Assistant Secretary.*

General statements as to recent activities of some of the Divisions of the Council are appended.

Division of Engineering.—The tests of tractors and of special balloons have been very successful, and have established definitely the value of these two devices; and important progress has been made in the experiments on one of the special guns and one type of tank. In addition, a new hydraulic power transmission system, and a new navigation apparatus for aircraft have been taken in hand.

Various committees of the *Section on Metallurgy* have been active and the work of the *Helmet Committee* has been hastened by increasing the experiments in pressing refractory steels into helmet shape. Important progress has been made in the electric welding of ships. An additional committee to study the metallurgical aspects of this welding has been formed.

Division of Chemistry.—The principle item of interest to be reported for this month concerns the investigations in progress at various universities under the auspices of the Division. Fifty Research Problems are now being investigated; three of these have been satisfactorily completed and the data obtained transmitted to the Government agencies needing them.

Division of Geology and Geography.—The text books for use in S. A. T. C. courses, entitled "Military Geology and Topography" and "Introductory Meteorology" appeared toward the close of the month. Several conferences were held under the auspices of the Committee on Education and Special Training on the question of providing maps for use in the S. A. T. C. courses in colleges; as a result of this consultation a special committee has been appointed, of which P. S. Smith is Chairman, to make recommendations.

The Division has taken up the study of the problems of reconstruction in the courses of instruction and research in geology and geography. This subject was referred to the Geology Committee of which J. M. Clarke is Chairman, and to the Committee on Geography of which W. M. Davis is Chairman. Each committee is to consider its particular phase of the problem, including the institution of closer relations between scientific and engineering courses and of adequate provision for pure research.

Major Douglas W. Johnson, a member of the Executive Committee of the Division, has returned from Europe after several months' absence, during which he had exceptional opportunity to study the utilization of geological and geographical information in war. Through his observations and his very clear and concise reports to the Division he has been able to supply information of great value.

Division of Medicine.—During the month of October the Medical Division of the National Research Council received for use in research from Dr. W. W. Keen an additional gift of $101.74 representing further proceeds from the sale of his book entitled "The Treatment of War Wounds." Special disbursements were made in support of work (a) on the cause of influenza, and (b) the employment of "immunized" skin grafts in the healing of infected wounds. Six new research projects were authorized.

Division of Agriculture.—Considerable time has been given to the preparation of courses for the Students' Army Training Corps, in Biology, Animals in Relation to Disease, Protozoa, and Economic Botany, and of a Wood Inspectors' course with a view to the preparation of men competent to inspect wood for various uses.

The work of the *Fertilizer Committee* is progressing satisfactorily. Plans have been made with the coöperation of the U. S. Department of Agriculture to enlarge the project to include several additional states in the Mississippi Valley. Preliminary steps have also been taken to organize group projects in the eastern and southern states with reference to the use of fertilizers.

A *Salt Nutrition* project, which has for its object the determination of the absolute salt requirements, with special reference to potash, of important crops, has been formulated and coöperative arrangements completed for the inauguration of the work.

Considerable attention has been given by the *Committee on Botanical Raw Products* to sources of fiber supply, rubber and various valuable gums and resins, and reports regarding these projects have been furnished to branches of the Government where work seemed to be most closely related.

The work of the *War Emergency Board of Plant Pathologists* has progressed very satisfactorily and several important circulars have been issued by the Board for the information of plant pathologists in this and foreign countries. The losses to our food crops through plant diseases are enormous and work of this kind offers one of the best means for increasing the food supply. The Chairman of the Division is in Europe on special business for the Government and while there will confer with the foreign representatives of the Council and with representatives of some of the European Governments regarding coöperative work in the control of plant diseases. This is especially important with reference to potato diseases as this crop must be depended upon for supplying a large part of the starchy food for Europe as well as for our own army.